



U.S. Department of Transportation
Office of Public Affairs
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
Washington, DC 20590
<http://www.dot.gov/briefingroom>

BTS Data

BTS 29-15
Thursday, June 18, 2015
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April 2015 Passenger Airline Employment Data

U.S. scheduled passenger airlines employed 2.6 percent more workers in April 2015 than in April 2014, the U.S. Department of Transportation's Bureau of Transportation Statistics (BTS) reported today. April was the 17th consecutive month that full-time equivalent (FTE) employment for U.S. scheduled passenger airlines exceeded the same month of the previous year and was the highest monthly total since [September 2008](#) (Tables 1, 2, 3).

Scheduled Passenger Airline Full-Time Equivalent Employees,
Month of April, 1990-2015



Month-to-month, the number of FTEs rose 0.9 percent from March to April, the fourth consecutive monthly increase (Table 1A). Scheduled passenger airline categories include network, low-cost, regional and other airlines. [Historical employment data](#) can be found on the BTS web site.

The five network airlines that collectively employ two-thirds of the scheduled passenger airline FTEs reported 2.4 percent more FTEs in April 2015 than in April 2014 (Table 7). Alaska Airlines, American Airlines, US Airways and Delta Air Lines increased FTEs from April 2014 while United Airlines reduced FTEs (Table 9). Month-to-month, the number of network airline FTEs rose 0.8 percent from March to April, rising for the seventh consecutive month (Table 1A). Network airlines operate a significant portion of their flights using at least one hub where connections are made for flights to down-line destinations or spoke cities.

The six low-cost carriers reported 5.2 percent more FTEs in April 2015 than in April 2014 (Table 10). Allegiant Airlines, Spirit Airlines, JetBlue Airways, Southwest Airlines and Virgin America reported increases while Frontier Airlines reduced FTEs (Table 12). Month-to-month, the number of low-cost airline FTEs rose 1.7 percent from March to April, rising after a one-month decline (Table 1A). Low-cost airlines operate under a low-cost business model, with infrastructure and aircraft operating costs below the overall industry average.

The 12 regional carriers reported 0.4 percent fewer FTEs in April 2015 than in April 2014 (Table 13). Eight regional airlines – PSA Airlines, Mesa Airlines, Compass Airlines, Republic Airlines, Horizon Air, GoJet Airlines, Envoy, and SkyWest – reported increased employment levels. The others reported decreases (Table 15). Month-to-month, the number of regional airline FTEs fell 0.1 percent from March to April, declining after two monthly increases (Table 1A). Regional carriers typically provide service from small cities, using primarily regional jets to support the network carriers' hub and spoke systems.

Carrier Groups: The five network airlines employed 66.7 percent of the 394,176 FTEs employed by all scheduled passenger airlines in April, the six low-cost carriers employed 18.9 percent and the 12 regional carriers employed 12.8 percent (Table 4). The three airlines with the most FTEs in April – United, Delta and American – employed 55.6 percent of the month's total passenger airline FTEs (Tables 3, 6). In March, the most recent month available, these three airlines carried 40.7 percent of the passengers traveling on the 26 scheduled service passenger airlines that report monthly employment numbers.

Top Employers by Group: United employed the most FTEs (78,795) in April among the network airlines, Southwest employed the most FTEs (47,179) among low-cost airlines, and Envoy employed the most FTEs (10,937) among regional airlines. Four of the top five employers in the industry are network airlines (Table 6).

Airline Mergers: Airlines that announce mergers typically begin joint reporting following U.S. Department of Transportation approval and issuance of a single economic certificate. American and US Airways, following their January 2013 merger announcement, will report separately until the Department approves single carrier reporting and a single economic certificate is issued.

Network Airlines

The network airlines employed 2.4 percent more FTEs in April 2015 than in April 2014 and 0.9 percent more FTEs in April 2015 than in April 2011 (Tables 8, 9).

Low-Cost Airlines

The six low-cost airlines employed 5.2 percent more FTEs in April 2015 than in April 2014 and 12.5 percent more FTEs in April 2015 than in April 2011 (Tables 11, 12).

Regional Airlines

Regional airlines employed 0.4 percent fewer FTEs in April 2015 than in April 2014. The 12 regional carriers reporting in April 2015 employed 4.3 percent fewer FTEs in April 2015 than the 17 carriers reporting in April 2011 (Tables 14, 15).

Envoy operated as American Eagle prior to April 2014.

Reporting Notes

Airlines that operate at least one aircraft that has more than 60 seats or the capacity to carry a payload of passengers, cargo and fuel weighing more than 18,000 pounds must report monthly employment statistics.

The “Other Carrier” category generally reflects those airlines that operate within specific niche markets such as the Hawaiian Islands served by Hawaiian Airlines and Island Air Hawaii.

Data are compiled from monthly reports filed with BTS by commercial air carriers as of June 11. Additional [airline employment data](#) and previous [press releases](#) can be found on the BTS website. BTS has [scheduled release](#) of May passenger airline employment data for July 13.

Table 1: Yearly Change in Scheduled Passenger Airline Full-time Equivalent Employees* by Airline Group

Most recent 13 months - percent change compared to same month the previous year

	Network Airlines	Low- Cost Airlines	Regional Airlines	All Passenger Airlines**
Apr 2013-Apr 2014	0.4	1.5	2.3	1.0
May 2013-May 2014	0.5	1.8	2.4	1.1
Jun 2013-Jun 2014	0.3	2.2	1.9	0.9
Jul 2013-Jul 2014	0.4	2.5	3.5	1.3
Aug 2013-Aug 2014	0.1	3.0	2.5	1.0
Sep 2013-Sep 2014	0.4	2.9	1.9	1.1
Oct 2013-Oct 2014	0.3	3.8	-0.2	0.9
Nov 2013-Nov 2014	0.4	5.2	1.5	1.5
Dec 2013-Dec 2014	0.8	4.4	-0.2	1.4
Jan 2014-Jan 2015	0.8	4.6	-1.9	1.2
Feb 2014-Feb 2015	1.4	4.6	-0.3	1.8
Mar 2014-Mar 2015	1.7	4.0	-0.5	1.9
Apr 2014-Apr 2015	2.4	5.2	-0.4	2.6

Source: Bureau of Transportation Statistics

* Full-time Equivalent Employee (FTE) calculations count two part-time employees as one full-time employee.

** Includes network, low-cost, regional and other carriers. Other Carriers generally operate within specific niche markets. They are: Hawaiian Airlines, Sun Country Airlines and Island Air Hawaii.

Note: Percent changes based on numbers prior to rounding.

Note: See Table 2 for all passenger airlines, Table 7 for Network, Table 10 for Low-Cost and Table 13 for Regional.

Table 1A: Monthly Change in Scheduled Passenger Airline Full-time Equivalent Employees* by Airline Group

Percent change in FTEs from the previous month

	Network Airlines	Low-Cost Airlines	Regional Airlines	All Passenger Airlines**
Apr 2014-May 2014	0.3	0.5	0.2	0.4
May 2014-Jun 2014	0.0	0.0	-0.6	-0.1
Jun 2014-Jul 2014	0.0	0.3	1.5	0.3
Jul 2014-Aug 2014	-0.6	0.2	-0.9	-0.5
Aug 2014-Sep 2014	0.0	0.1	-0.3	0.0
Sep 2014-Oct 2014	0.1	1.0	-1.4	0.1
Oct 2014- Nov 2014	0.2	1.3	1.6	0.6
Nov 2014-Dec 2014	0.2	-0.8	-1.0	-0.2
Dec 2014-Jan 2015	0.1	0.7	-1.2	0.1
Jan 2015-Feb 2015	0.5	0.6	1.7	0.6
Feb 2015-Mar 2015	0.8	-0.2	0.1	0.5
Mar 2015-Apr 2015	0.8	1.7	-0.1	0.9

Source: Bureau of Transportation Statistics

* Full-time Equivalent Employee (FTE) calculations count two part-time employees as one full-time employee.

** Includes network, low-cost, regional and other carriers. Other Carriers generally operate within specific niche markets. They are: Hawaiian Airlines, Sun Country Airlines and Island Air Hawaii.

Note: Percent changes based on numbers prior to rounding.

Note: See Table 2 for all passenger airlines, Table 7 for Network, Table 10 for Low-Cost and Table 13 for Regional.

Table 2: Change from Previous Year in Scheduled Passenger Airline* Full-time Equivalent Employees**

Percent change compared to same month of the previous year

Month	2012	2013	2014	2015
January	2.1	-2.3	0.5	1.2
February	2.1	-2.5	0.4	1.8
March	2.1	-2.7	0.8	1.9
April	1.8	-2.4	1.0	2.6
May	1.6	-2.5	1.1	
June	1.4	-2.4	0.9	
July	0.8	-2.6	1.3	
August	0.1	-2.2	1.0	
September	-0.6	-1.6	1.1	
October	-1.3	-0.8	0.9	
November	-2.0	-0.1	1.5	
December	-2.6	0.3	1.4	

Source: Bureau of Transportation Statistics

* Includes network, low-cost, regional and other carriers.

** Full-time Equivalent Employee (FTE) calculations count two part-time employees as one full-time employee.

Note: Percent changes based on numbers prior to rounding.

Table 3: Scheduled Passenger Airline Full-time Equivalent Employees* by Month 2011-2015
FTE numbers in thousands (000's)

Month	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	Percent Change	
						2011-2015	2014-2015
January	380.9	388.8	380.0	381.8	386.6	1.5	1.2
February	381.8	389.9	380.4	382.0	389.0	1.9	1.8
March	387.1	390.8	380.5	383.6	390.8	1.0	1.9
April	383.7	390.2	381.0	384.3	394.2	2.7	2.6
May	385.0	391.0	381.4	385.6			
June	385.4	390.9	381.7	385.2			
July	386.8	391.3	381.3	386.2			
August	388.5	389.0	380.6	384.5			
September	388.6	386.4	380.2	384.4			
October	389.4	384.3	381.2	384.7			
November	389.4	381.6	381.2	386.9			
December	389.7	379.6	380.8	386.2			
12-Month Average	386.4	387.8	380.9	384.6			
Jan-Apr Average	383.4	389.9	380.5	382.9	390.1	1.8	1.9

Source: Bureau of Transportation Statistics

* Includes network, low-cost, regional and other carriers.

** Full-time Equivalent Employee (FTE) calculations count two part-time employees as one full-time employee.

Note: Percent changes based on numbers prior to rounding.

Table 4: Airline Group Full-time Equivalent Employees*, April 2011-2015
FTE numbers in thousands (000's)

	Network	Low-Cost	Regional	All Passenger Airlines**
2011	260.6	66.1	52.6	383.7
2012	263.7	69.9	51.8	390.2
2013	255.7	69.7	49.4	380.5
2014	256.7	70.8	50.5	384.3
2015	262.9	74.4	50.3	394.2
Pct. Change 2011-2015	0.9%	12.5%	-4.3%	2.7%
Percent of Total Passenger Airline Employees in 2015	66.7%	18.9%	12.8%	100.0%

Source: Bureau of Transportation Statistics

* Full-time Equivalent Employee (FTE) calculations count two part-time employees as one full-time employee.

** Includes network, low-cost, regional and other carriers.

Table 5: Year-to-Year Change in Airline Group Full-time Equivalent Employees*, April 2011-2015

Percent change in FTEs from the same month of the previous year

	Network	Low-Cost	Regional	All Passenger Airlines**
2011	1.9	4.0	2.1	2.0
2012	1.2	5.7	-1.5	1.7
2013	-3.0	-0.3	-3.8	-2.4
2014	0.4	1.5	1.3	1.0
2015	2.4	5.2	-0.4	2.6

Source: Bureau of Transportation Statistics

* Full-time Equivalent Employee (FTE) calculations count two part-time employees as one full-time employee.

** Includes network, low-cost, regional and other carriers.

Table 6: Top 10 Airlines, April 2015

Ranked by Number of Full-Time Equivalent Employees*

FTE numbers in thousands (000's)

Rank	Airline	Total FTE Employees	Carrier Group**	Top 10 Airlines April 2014
1	United	78.8	Network	United
2	Delta	77.8	Network	Delta
3	American	62.8	Network	American
4	Southwest	47.2	Low-Cost	Southwest
5	US Airways	33.0	Network	US Airways
6	JetBlue	14.3	Low-Cost	JetBlue
7	Envoy***	10.9	Regional	American Eagle
8	Alaska	10.6	Network	SkyWest
9	SkyWest	9.8	Regional	Alaska
10	ExpressJet	8.2	Regional	ExpressJet

Source: Bureau of Transportation Statistics

* Full-time Equivalent Employee (FTE) calculations count two part-time employees as one full-time employee.

** See Table 9 for Network, Table 12 for Low-Cost and Table 15 for Regional.

*** Envoy operated as American Eagle prior to April 2014

Table 7: Network Airline Year-to-Year Change in Full-time Equivalent Employees* from the Previous Year

Percent change compared to same month of the previous year

	2012	2013	2014	2015
January	1.5	-3.1	0.4	0.8
February	1.2	-3.0	0.1	1.4
March	1.2	-3.3	0.6	1.7
April	1.3	-3.0	0.4	2.4
May	1.3	-3.0	0.5	
June	1.4	-2.8	0.3	
July	0.8	-2.8	0.4	
August	-0.2	-2.5	0.1	
September	-0.8	-2.1	0.4	
October	-1.4	-1.4	0.3	
November	-2.4	-0.4	0.4	
December	-3.3	0.4	0.8	

Source: Bureau of Transportation Statistics

* Full-time Equivalent Employee (FTE) calculations count two part-time employees as one full-time employee.

Table 8: Network Airline Full-time Equivalent Employees* by Month 2011-2015

FTE numbers in thousands (000's)

Month	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	Percent Change	
						2011-2015	2014-2015
January	258.9	262.6	254.4	255.5	257.6	-0.5	0.8
February	259.8	262.8	255.0	255.2	258.8	-0.4	1.4
March	260.8	263.5	254.9	256.3	260.8	0.0	1.7
April	260.6	263.7	255.7	256.7	262.9	0.9	2.4
May	260.8	264.2	256.3	257.6			
June	260.7	264.3	256.8	257.5			
July	261.8	263.8	256.5	257.5			
August	263.1	262.4	255.8	256.1			
September	262.6	260.6	255.2	256.1			
October	262.9	259.2	255.7	256.4			
November	263.1	256.8	255.9	256.8			
December	262.6	254.1	255.2	257.3			
12-Month Average	261.5	261.5	255.6	256.6			
Jan-Apr Average	260.0	263.1	255.0	255.9	260.0	0.0	1.6

Source: Bureau of Transportation Statistics

* Full-time Equivalent Employee (FTE) calculations count two part-time employees as one full-time employee.

Note: Percent changes based on numbers prior to rounding.

Table 9: Network Airline Full-time Equivalent Employees*, April 2011-2015

(FTEs for April of each year. Ranked by April 2015 FTEs)

FTE numbers in thousands (000's)

Rank	Airline	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	Percent Change	
							2011-2015	2014-2015
1	UA/CO Combined	80.3	82.3	82.4	80.4	78.8	-1.9	-2.0
	United**	43.5	82.3	82.4	80.4	78.8	N/A	-2.0
	Continental**	36.8	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
2	Delta	75.1	76.7	73.9	75.0	77.8	3.6	3.7
3	American	66.4	65.3	59.0	59.9	62.8	-5.5	4.8
4	US Airways	30.0	30.4	30.9	31.7	33.0	10.0	4.1
5	Alaska	8.9	9.0	9.4	9.8	10.6	19.0	8.3
	Total	260.6	263.7	255.7	256.7	262.9	0.9	2.4

Source: Bureau of Transportation Statistics

* Full-time Equivalent Employee (FTE) calculations count two part-time employees as one full-time employee

** United Airlines and Continental Airlines merged and began reporting combined numbers in January 2012.

Note: Percent changes based on numbers prior to rounding.

Table 10: Low-Cost Airline Year-to-Year Change in Full-time Equivalent Employees* from the Previous Year

Percent change compared to same month of the previous year

Month	2012	2013	2014	2015
January	5.7	1.1	0.3	4.6
February	6.4	0.2	0.7	4.6
March	7.1	-0.1	0.8	4.0
April	5.7	-0.3	1.5	5.2
May	5.3	-0.3	1.8	
June	4.0	-0.6	2.2	
July	3.5	-0.4	2.5	
August	2.5	0.0	3.0	
September	2.5	-0.2	2.9	
October	1.9	-0.1	3.8	
November	1.4	-0.1	5.2	
December	1.3	-0.6	4.4	

Source: Bureau of Transportation Statistics

* Full-time Equivalent Employee (FTE) calculations count two part-time employees as one full-time employee.

Note: Percent changes based on numbers prior to rounding.

Table 11: Low-Cost Airline Full-time Equivalent Employees* by Month 2011-2015

FTE numbers in thousands (000's)

	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	Percent Change	
						2011-2015	2014-2015
January	65.0	68.7	69.5	69.7	72.9	12.2	4.6
February	65.3	69.5	69.6	70.1	73.4	12.3	4.6
March	65.5	69.9	69.9	70.4	73.2	11.8	4.0
April	66.1	69.9	69.7	70.8	74.4	12.5	5.2
May	66.6	70.1	69.8	71.1			
June	67.3	70.0	69.6	71.1			
July	67.4	69.8	69.5	71.3			
August	67.7	69.4	69.4	71.4			
September	67.9	69.6	69.4	71.4			
October	68.3	69.6	69.5	72.1			
November	68.5	69.4	69.4	73.0			
December	68.9	69.8	69.4	72.4			
12-Month Average	67.0	69.6	69.5	71.2			
Jan-Apr Average	65.5	69.5	69.6	70.2	73.5	12.2	4.6

Source: Bureau of Transportation Statistics

Note: Percent changes and averages based on numbers prior to rounding.

* Full-time Equivalent Employee (FTE) calculations count two part-time employees as one full-time employee.

Table 12: Low-Cost Carrier Full-time Equivalent Employees,* April 2011-2015**

(FTEs for April of each year. Ranked by April 2015 FTEs)

Rank		2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	Percent Change	
							2011-2015	2014-2015
1	WN/FL Combined	43,707	46,124	45,590	45,217	47,179	7.9	4.3
	Southwest**	35,644	46,124	45,590	45,217	47,179	32.4	4.3
	AirTran	8,063	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
2	JetBlue	11,745	12,594	12,872	13,638	14,347	22.2	5.2
3	Spirit	2,281	2,692	3,159	3,652	4,214	84.7	15.4
4	Frontier	4,929	4,331	3,737	3,628	3,612	-26.7	-0.4
5	Virgin America	1,842	2,393	2,420	2,527	2,602	41.3	3.0
6	Allegiant	1,613	1,728	1,899	2,089	2,443	51.5	16.9
	Total	66,117	69,862	69,677	70,751	74,397	12.5	5.2

Source: Bureau of Transportation Statistics

* Full-time Equivalent Employee (FTE) calculations count two part-time employees as one full-time employee.

** Southwest Airlines and AirTran Airways merged and began reporting combined employment numbers in April 2012.

Note: Percent changes based on numbers prior to rounding.

Table 13: Regional Airline Year-to-Year Change in Full-time Equivalent Employees* from the Previous Year

Percent change compared to same month of the previous year

Month	2012	2013	2014	2015
January	0.1	-4.1	-0.4	-1.9
February	0.8	-5.0	0.5	-0.3
March	0.2	-4.6	0.9	-0.5
April	-1.5	-3.8	2.3	-0.4
May	-2.2	-4.5	2.4	
June	-2.5	-4.4	1.9	
July	-3.3	-6.3	3.5	
August	-2.3	-5.1	2.5	
September	-4.3	-3.0	1.9	
October	-6.0	-0.8	-0.2	
November	-5.4	-0.5	1.5	
December	-5.4	-0.5	-0.2	

Source: Bureau of Transportation Statistics

* Full-time Equivalent Employee (FTE) calculations count two part-time employees as one full-time employee.

Note: Percent changes based on numbers prior to rounding.

Table 14: Regional Airline Full-time Equivalent Employees* by Month 2011-2015

FTE numbers in thousands (000's)

	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	Percent Change	
						2011-2015	2014-2015
January	52.8	52.8	50.6	50.4	49.5	-6.2	-1.9
February	52.4	52.8	50.2	50.5	50.3	-4.0	-0.3
March	52.5	52.6	50.2	50.6	50.4	-4.0	-0.5
April	52.6	51.8	49.9	50.5	50.3	-4.3	-0.4
May	52.9	51.7	49.5	50.6			
June	53.0	51.7	49.4	50.3			
July	53.2	52.7	49.4	51.1			
August	53.3	52.1	49.4	50.7			
September	53.4	51.1	49.5	50.5			
October	53.5	50.3	49.9	49.8			
November	53.0	50.1	49.9	50.6			
December	53.3	50.4	50.2	50.1			
12-Month Average	53.0	51.7	49.8	50.5			
Jan-Apr Average	52.6	52.5	50.2	50.5	50.1	-4.6	-0.8

Source: Bureau of Transportation Statistics

* Full-time Equivalent Employee (FTE) calculations count two part-time employees as one full-time employee.

Note: Percent changes based on numbers prior to rounding.

Table 15: Regional Airline Full-time Equivalent Employees*, April 2011-2015
(FTEs for April of each year. Ranked by April 2015 FTEs)

Rank		2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	Percent Change	
							2011-2015	2014-2015
1	Envoy**	9,690	9,772	11,164	10,862	10,937	12.9	0.7
2	SkyWest	9,176	9,307	9,391	9,764	9,809	6.9	0.5
3	XE/EV Combined	8,930	9,448	8,873	9,333	8,173	-8.5	-12.4
	ExpressJet***	5,174	9,448	8,873	9,333	8,173	N/A	-12.4
	Atlantic Southeast***	3,756	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
4	9E/XJ Combined	5,686	4,681	4,394	3,822	3,270	-42.5	-14.4
	Endeavor****	3,523	4,681	4,394	3,822	3,270	N/A	-14.4
	Mesaba****	2,163	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
5	Republic	2,196	1,879	2,295	2,821	3,170	-10.0	12.4
6	Horizon	2,836	2,817	2,672	2,788	3,108	43.7	11.5
10	Air Wisconsin	2,571	2,623	2,520	2,555	1,901	-13.4	-25.6
8	Mesa	1,961	1,743	1,611	1,906	2,424	-14.5	27.2
7	S5/RP Combined	1,402	1,895	3,220	3,003	2,771	N/A	-7.7
	Shuttle America [#]	1,402	1,895	2,012	2,039	2,764	N/A	N/A
	Chautauqua [#]	N/A	N/A	1,208	964	7	N/A	N/A
9	PSA	991	1,051	1,063	1,338	2,141	116.0	60.0
11	Compass	931	1,071	1,091	1,223	1,495	60.6	22.2
12	GoJet	586	861	1,093	1,111	1,134	93.5	2.1
13	Executive^{##}	1,864	1,543	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
14	Colgan^{###}	1,558	1,522	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
15	Comair^{####}	2,223	1,600	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
	Total	52,601	51,813	49,387	50,526	50,333	-4.3	-0.4

Source: Bureau of Transportation Statistics

* Full-time Equivalent Employee (FTE) calculations count two part-time employees as one full-time employee.

** Envoy Airlines operated as American Eagle prior to April 2014.

*** ExpressJet Airlines and Atlantic Southeast Airlines began reporting combined numbers in January 2012.

**** Endeavor Airlines operated as Pinnacle prior to September 2013. Pinnacle Airlines and Mesaba Airlines began reporting combined numbers in January 2012.

[#] Effective July 2012 Chautauqua Airlines began reporting employment data. Chautauqua did not qualify for monthly reporting prior to July 2012 because it did not operate aircraft with more than 60 seats. Effective the end of December 2014, Shuttle America and Chautauqua combined operations and Chautauqua ceased operating.

^{##} Effective the end of March 2013, Executive Airlines ceased operations.

^{###} Effective the end of September 2012, Colgan Airlines ceased operations.

^{####} Effective the end of October 2012, Comair ceased operations.

N/A: Carriers did not meet the standard for filing, was no longer operating, merged with another operating carrier or failed to file. See previous notes.

Note: Percent changes based on numbers prior to rounding.